

HUNTERDON COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

Minutes – July 7, 2022

MEMBERS PRESENT: Carol Hoffmann, Phil Greiner, Gabrielle Bolarakis, Richard Dodds, Dana Desiderio (Phone in), Page Stiger, Commissioner Kuhl

ABSENT: Andy Borkin, Tom Mathews, Marc Saluk, Bill Millette, Commissioner Soloway

STAFF PRESENT: Bob Hornby, Carrie Fellows, Katherine Fullerton, Patty Liedner, Derek Swanson, Frank Bell, Rebecca Deakin, Kris Melchers, Asst. County Counsel Aaron Culton.

"This meeting is being held in accordance with the provisions of the Open Public Meetings Act. Adequate notice has been provided by prominently posting copies of this notice on the first and second floor of the Main Street County Complex, 71 Main Street, Building #1, Flemington, New Jersey, and filed in the Office of the County Clerk on or about January 7, 2022. This notice was faxed/emailed to the following newspapers or about January 7, 2022: The Hunterdon Democrat, The Star Ledger, Trenton Times, Courier News and Express Times, newspapers designated to receive such notices. It was also posted online at the Hunterdon County News and on the Hunterdon County website."

MINUTES OF THE JUNE 2, 2022, MEETING

Motion to approve minutes with corrections as discussed, Page Stiger. Richard Dodds seconded; Dana Desiderio, Commissioner Kuhl abstained. Motion carried.

COUNTY COMMISSIONER UPDATE

Commissioner Kuhl introduced himself to the Board. He stated that he was born at Hunterdon Medical Center and has lived here all his life. He met his wife senior year at Hunterdon Central and has been married for 38 years. He has two grown children. He has wanted to be involved with the towns and see what can be done. He started 25 years ago on the Raritan Township Planning Board and has a lot of Planning and Zoning experience.

STAFF UPDATES

Farmland: Bob Hornby

There are 16 active preservation applications in 9 municipalities: 4 in the County Planning Incentive Grant Program, 4 in the Municipal Planning Incentive Grant Program, and 8 in the State Direct Easement Program. There were 2 June closings; one on the Magnolia Creek Farm, a 30-acre equine operation in Franklin and another in Holland, about 90 acres of hay and Christmas trees. There is a new application in East and West Amwell of several non-contiguous lots totaling about 50 acres under the same ownership as an existing easement of about 1,000 acres. Annual monitoring of all County held easements was completed by the June 30 deadline by Hunterdon Soil Conservation District Staff. The Hunterdon County Agriculture Development Board (CADB) will be meeting on July 14 at 8pm. There is a Right to Farm Hearing for a small vineyard in Raritan looking to construct a pad for processing grapes. A bill for Special Occasion Events on preserved farms bills was passed by the Legislature and awaits the Governor's signature. The ag community is watching the spread of avian flu and the potential for damage on chicken flocks. High fuel and input costs continue to be an area of special concern for Hunterdon farmers. The CADB and the Land Conservancy of NJ continue work on the Comprehensive Farmland Development Plan; an evening meeting on April 14 and lunchtime zoom on June 8 gathered public input to inform the writing of a draft plan expected in the fall. First adopted in 2008, the plan is required to be updated every 10 years to qualify for continuing SADC preservation funding. Board members noted that they received a 2-question survey via email. Bob explained that this is a nonscientific survey just for information use only. It is not part of the plan.

Open Space: Bill Millette/Carrie Fellows

New opportunities continue to be explored in Alexandria, Bethlehem, Clinton, Franklin, Lebanon, and Readington Townships. Appraisals are underway for three opportunities, and we have a pending contract on one property. We closed on the 17-acre Lauber property, adding that property to the Musconetcong Mountain Preserve. Hunterdon Land Trust, Raritan Township, and the County anticipate preserving the remaining property next month. The 2022

Open Space grant round is open for applicants and has been funded with over \$2.5 million. The next meeting for grant considerations is July 25, 2022. The County is making site preparations for the installation of a bridge over the Prescott Brook to connect Echo Hill with the Arboretum via a walking path. Park infrastructure upgrades, deferred maintenance items, and storm damage repairs continue to be addressed. Hazard tree removals are ongoing. A consultant has been chosen to perform a hazard tree inventory for all park areas. Park staff will continue to tag each hazard tree with a number to be logged into a data base.

GIS: Patricia Liedner

There have been a few requests on the Hunterdon Harvest app since June. We have 32 requests; ten have been mapped, nine have started, eight haven't been started, three have been completed but there are issues with submission that they haven't addressed yet, and two didn't meet the criteria. We are still trying to promote the app with media posts. We are almost done updating the slopes coverage with the newly released digital elevation mapping. We are still familiarizing ourselves with the new ArcGIS software program. We continue to update parcels in the Frenchtown Borough. We are almost done with two web mapping applications for the Human Services Department. One will display mental health facilities and the other drug addiction facilities with drug drop-off location and information. We continue to work with HuntHistory.org for the Cultural and Heritage Commission. Richard asked about the definition of "steep slopes" in Hunterdon County. Anything from 15% to 25% is one range and anything over 25% is another.

Projects: Frank Bell

Frank reported that properties at 8 and 10 Court Street, the old sheriffs building and the old carriage house in the back, are included in renovations in the coming years. Regarding the Justice Center Cooling towers; Phase I is relatively complete with just a few minor issues to be completed, Phase II will start shortly with the interior cooling. The Historic Courthouse bid results should be coming in in the middle of August. The Rt 12 Library interior renovations are moving along on the first floor and lower level. The burn building is moving along with most of the steel frame up. This should be completed sometime in August.

Planning Issues: Katherine Fullerton

Staff have been very busy in Planning services with the Growth Management Plan and NJTPA. The Division had a presence at Community Day on June 11. Small flyers were handed out with information on the Growth Management Plan. Not all of them were given out, now we are distributing them for the public to take. Municipalities are responding with their plans for inclusion in the Growth Management Plan. We had our second talk on the EV ordinance last week. We are working on the final report for the FY22 NJTPA grant which is due July 22nd. In a few weeks we will be starting to work on the FY24 grant. The Human Services 2020 Transportation Plan is also moving along. Although that plan does not come out of this office, it does look at gaps in the LINK transportation service. The Sustainability Committee is doing an assessment on what the County has done to be considered sustainable. The County has installed the first water bottle filler in the Administrative Building. The county libraries will be next to have water bottle fillers. There was a special Executive Committee meeting session due to a request for a change to the sewer service area. We did this so that the Commissioners could approve it at the July 5 meeting, which they did. Application reviews have been slow due to it being summer; a lot have been returns. The DRC application review for today is a 7-lot subdivision in Raritan Township.

Department Head: Carrie Fellows

Parks & Recreation

The free Music Under the Stars Concert series has started on Thursdays from 7-9pm for July and August at Deer Path Park.

Cultural & Heritage Commission

The Special Projects grants had been approved by the BOCC on the July 5th meeting for arts and history. We have been working with re-grantees and new putting together the Arts & Economic Prosperity 6 (AEP6) survey with the support of Americans for the Arts and partially funded through our local arts program and NJ ARTPRIDE. This survey is to acquire data of the spending habits of the people in the county to attend festivals, exhibits, shows etc., and see how this contributes to the Hunterdon County economy.

Rutgers Cooperative Extension

The Hunterdon County 4H Fair is in full motion as they prepare for probably the biggest fair since the pandemic. It will be held on Wednesday August 24th through Sunday the 28th.

On a personal note, Carrie said that she is leaving public service in Hunterdon County for a position in the non-for-profit sector. Her last day in the office will be Friday July 29th. She said that she enjoyed working with everyone and

that a challenging job was made fun because of you all. In other news Mr. Davis, the County Administrator, will have his last day July 8th. He will continue as a part-time aid to the Commissioners. Brad Myher, currently the Deputy Administrator and Clerk, will now be the County Administrator. Shana Taylor from County Counsel will be the Deputy Administrator. Katrina Campbell will start on Monday as new County Counsel.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Executive Committee:

Carol reported that the Committee did meet about extending the sewer area and talked more about having another breakfast talk in the fall. We are aiming for a talk on Stormwater Management.

Development Review Committee (DRC) Report:

Carol and Gabrielle volunteered for today's DRC meeting. Katherine will send an email requesting volunteers if needed for the July 21st meeting.

Transportation: Tom Mathews

Tom was not present to give report.

Old Business/New Business:

No new business to report.

Public Comment:

No public comment at this time.

There was no further business to be brought before the Board. Richard Dodds made a motion to adjourn the Planning Board meeting, Page Stiger seconded. Meeting was adjourned at 9:11AM.

NEXT MEETING DATE: Thursday September 1st, 2022, at 8:15 AM

Susan Pena for Secretary, Phil Greiner